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COMMUNICATIONS.

Open Communion.

My first pastorate was in the town of Marion, Smyth county, Va., in the year 1853. On one rainy evening, I received a message to go immediately up street and see an old gentleman who was about to die. I obeyed the summons, and was soon at the bedside of Mr. Pearson. Many relatives of wealth and influence were weeping around the aged form, waiting to hear the last words of their dying parent.

"Mr. Pearson," said I, "are you a member of the church?"

"I am not," was the reply.

"You are not a professor of religion, then?"

"No, sir."

"Do you wish to become a Christian?"

"Yes, sir; that is why I sent for you."

I then explained to him, as best I could, the plan of salvation. He asked me to read a chapter. I did so, and commented as I read. He asked me to pray for him. I did so, and then sang a hymn. When the hymn was ended I had hoped to hear some evidence of conversion; but he gave none. Mrs. Pearson then came to the bed, and falling upon my knees by me, and looking up in my face, with tears in her eyes, said:

"Will you please administer the communion to him before he dies?"

I hesitated to answer, for my sympathies were enlisted in behalf of the sinner, and the grief-stricken relatives, and I was ready to do anything in my power, that was right, for their comfort; but I knew he was not prepared for such a thing. She repeated:

"Will you please administer the communion to him before he dies?"

Said I, "I can do that; I don't think the Scriptures authorize me to administer the communion to those who are not baptized persons."

But, said I, there is a Methodist minister in town, perhaps he will, if you desire it, I will go and see."

"I will be glad if you would," said she.

So I took my hat and walked down to the parsonage—stopped at the door, and Bro. S. appeared.

"Good evening, Bro. S. Come in."

"Thank you, Bro. S., there is an old gentleman up street very sick—about to die—and the relatives desired me to administer the communion to him; but he is not a professor of religion, and I can't do it. But I told them perhaps you would, and I have come to see."

"Yes, I will; but come in until I get ready."

While he was getting ready I was thinking if I am wrong about this, I would like to know it. So when he came into the room again, I said:

"Bro. S., does the Methodist church administer the communion to a person before he is converted?"

"Yes, it does."

"Well, now, if I am wrong about this, I would like to know it. What is your Scripture for it?"

"S. We think a penitent is a fit subject for the communion."

"N. Well, what is your Scripture for it?"

"S. We believe when a person receives to do better, that he is then a proper subject for communion."

"That is what you believe about it; but where is your Scripture for it?"

"S. Why, we believe a penitent—any one who wishes to become a Christian—is Scripturally qualified to commune."

"N. But Paul says: 'He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself.'"

"S. Well, the first thing to ascertain, what is meant by eating and drinking unworthily. The apostle explains in the same connection, by saying it is those who do not discern the Lord's body."

"N. Very good; that is the very passage I would have quoted myself, not discerning the Lord's body. If I understand, perfectly, the Lord's body is discerned by faith and the word of Christ. 'Comes only through the blood of Christ.' This old man, according to his own statement, has not believed—he has not been made worthy through the blood of Christ; therefore, he can't discern the Lord's body."

"S. But he is a penitent, and every anxious inquirer should have the benefit of every means possible."

"N. Why, yes, every lawful means; but Christ says: 'Except a man be born again (born of the Spirit) he cannot see the kingdom of God.' And why? Because, 'the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are Spiritually discerned.'"

1 Cor. 2:14. Then the Lord's body is discerned. Spiritually, and a man must be born of the Spirit in order to discern it. This old man is not born of the Spirit, therefore, he cannot discern the Lord's body; and if he were to commune, he would be eating and drinking damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."

S. But you will admit that every man, who is willing to accept Christ, should have the benefit of Christ's death?"

N. Of course; but how can you administer Christ to a man before he comes to Christ?"

S. "Oh! we believe the communion is a means of grace to help one to Christ."

N. Upon what Scripture do you believe that?"

S. "Well, I confess I have not examined the subject thoroughly, and don't recollect just now what Scripture."

N. "Then you don't know certainly whether you are right or wrong?"

S. "Oh! G. bless your soul, a penitent can take the communion! Why, I have known persons to be converted while at the communion table. Of course, they look upon it only as a means of grace."

N. "The Bible, nowhere, says it is a means of grace; nor does the Bible, anywhere, offer it to penitents; but in every instance, the language is addressed only to baptized believers."

S. "But do you think God would bless a means, and convert souls thereby, if that means was not right and proper?"

N. "There is no saving means but the blood of Christ; for you are saved by grace through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Paul says converted while persecuting the church, but the conversion did not justify the persecution."

S. "Then do you think we are by trying to save souls by this means?"

N. "If there is no Scripture for it, you are doing something without the authority of God's Word; and if I were to do this, I would feel that I was administering damnation to them."

S. "Of course, you couldn't, believe as you do."

N. "No, nor do I see how any minister can, seeing there is no Scripture for it; but many passages which teach directly to the contrary."

By this time we had walked up street to the sick man's house. Bro. S. went in, and I remained. I learned afterwards that he administered the communion. The old man died in a few days, without giving any evidence of conversion. M. V. N.

Church Development.

NO. 2.

2. If we would be eminently successful in reaching the hearts of the people, we must present right motives. This is most important. Intellectual knowledge alone is not sufficient. It is necessary as the channel through which to reach the heart. Open the channel first, and then let there pour constantly through it a stream of unending love. Love to Christ is the great motive to all Christian benevolence. It is that which underlies and is the main spring of all others. When Paul, in his zealous labors and great sacrifices for the Master, exclaimed, "The love of Christ constraineth me," he expressed the feeling of every regenerated heart. Many of us, alas! have forgotten our first love. We are prone to forget it; and we need to be reminded of it frequently, to have rekindled again and again a flame of sacred love in our cold hearts. This is done by the Holy Spirit, through the Word. Hence, when the Apostle Paul would urge those to whom he wrote, to deeds of charity and benevolence, he would present this motive: "Though He was rich, yet for your sakes, He became poor; that ye, through His poverty, might be rich." "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

Any appeal made by pastor or agent in which this great underlying motive is left out, is a sad failure. And any contribution made without this motive is a failure equally sad. "God loves a cheerful giver," but He "abhors the sacrifice where the heart is not found."

It is the opinion of the writers—and let that opinion be worth little or much, it must be expressed—that a reformation is needed in our methods of raising money for the Lord. There is too much raised by means of clap-netting—anything to create an excitement and get the money. To induce the people to give, appeals are made to their pride or their passions, their prejudices or sympathies. By these means an excitement is created, somewhat similar to our annual protracted meeting excitements, and with results equally similar—a large contribution—ingathering—multitudes of God, with no heart to give—nothing more till the next excitement. When the next excitement comes, they are less inclined to give—do—than before; and thus, gradually but surely these great "conversions" kill off all Christian benevolence, as well as Christian activity. Our churches don't need spasmodic excitements. They have had too many of them already. Spasms are dangerous things, and have already taken the life of many a noble church.

What the members of our churches need more than anything else, is to present their bodies a living sacrifice unto God; which means an entire consecration of heart, soul and body to the Lord. This would impel them to constant, regular work for the Master. Then there would be a regular systematic flowing into the treasury of the Lord every week, month or quarter of the year, from the churches all over our land. Then the missionaries of the cross would be multiplied by hundreds, and the whole earth would soon be filled with the glory of Christ. But what will induce our members thus to consecrate themselves? Nothing but regular, persistent appeals to the gratitude of their hearts for God's mercies. Paul says: "I beseech you by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice unto God." If you would arouse a Christian to the highest degree of activity and zeal for the Master, make him sensible of God's goodness to him in his salvation. Let his heart feel that Christ's own precious blood has purchased him from the thralldom of sin and the pains of Hell, and he will be prepared not only to give and work for Christ, but also to pour out his own blood to glorify His blessed name. Nothing affords the heart of a Christian so powerfully as a sense of gratitude to God for what He has done for him. There is no motive so strong as the love which proceeds from this sense of gratitude. There is nothing, therefore, that can so develop the Christian activity and benevolence of our churches as this all-potent motive—love. Pastors should be constantly presenting this motive, and emphasizing it, until the members come to feel ashamed to give from any other motive.

In the present condition of our churches, it will be slow work to get the members up to this standard; but it will be sure work. Every now and then the faithful pastor will have the pleasure of seeing a brother's eyes open to the fact that he is only Christ's steward, and that it is a luxury to give to the Lord. But slow as it is, it is the only way to develop selfless giving. It is the only way in which our churches can be raised to the highest degree of efficiency in the Lord's evangelization.

4. Pastors should afford their members frequent opportunities to give. Giving is like all other Christian graces, it is improved by exercise. The more a Christian prays, the more he feels like praying. So, the more he gives, the more he will feel like giving. First inculcate the motive, and then put the grace into exercise. Nor need pastors be afraid that this will drive away their congregations. The writer knows a church that, some years ago, wanted to begin to take up a collection every Sabbath. The matter was talked over in conference, and it was decided that to do so would drive away the congregations. But after awhile, one of the deacons took the responsibility upon himself, and began to take up a collection every Sunday. This he has been doing for several years, and so far from diminishing the congregation, it has increased. And why should it not increase? A true Christian ought always to be glad to give when he can worship the Lord (and giving is an essential part of worship), while the ungodly don't care whether a collection is taken up or not. It is strange, but it is a fact, that objections to frequent collections come, not from the unconverted, but from professors themselves. I have noticed that those who grumble and are driven away from church because of frequent collections, are those who profess to be disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Shame on such professors! Would not our churches be better off without them?

5. In teaching churches to give, the pastors should themselves set the example. "Actions speak louder than words." Christ, our great Teacher, always practiced what He preached. He never taught a duty that He did not himself perform. He never gave a precept that He did not exemplify in His life. So must pastors do if they would be successful in developing the churches. They

must practice what they preach. A stony pastor will make a stony church. Great liberality on the part of the pastors will prove that they are sincere in what they preach, and will go very far towards developing the liberality of the churches.

But, after all that the pastor can say or do, there will be some in every church that will not be developed, but will persist in grumbling, finding fault, ridiculing and otherwise throwing obstacles in the way of building up the church. What shall be done with these? Let the church counsel them, admonish them and pray for them. If they still persist, by all means, for their own good, the good of the church and the glory of the Master, cut them off. I never could see why such members wanted to stay in a church which they are all the while trying to pull down. Nor can I see why any church will consent to be burdened long with such members.

J. L. P.

Dear Bro. Gambrell:—

The year, with us, has just closed. I mean our pastoral year, and we have great reasons for being joyful and thankful to our heavenly Father; for our labors have not been in vain. We have had preaching regularly, only once a month, and while we would prefer it oftener, we feel we have two sufficiently good reasons for not having service more frequently. First, we are too poor to pay a man to do more than that that to us; second, there is such great destitution in our immediate vicinity, that we are willing to divide the time and services of our pastor with our neighbors, even if we could pay for more time than this.

Some think that once-a-month preaching is a poor chance for the spread of the gospel. Maybe it is, but I have only to remind my brethren that country churches all over the land have been built up and hundreds of thousands of sinners have been converted and baptized, and the influence of the church has been a power felt and acknowledged far and wide, all under the once-a-month preaching. Country and village churches are rarely able to have preaching more than once a month; and yet, it is from these that our city churches are, in a great measure, built up; and hundreds of the best and most efficient ministers were converted and brought up in the ministry under this system. We fear there is a disposition on the part of some churches and some ministers, to content themselves with a full service, to their detriment. It is an old saying, but a true one, "A half a loaf is better than no bread at all"; and in our case we find that even a quarter of a loaf is far better than none. Our experiment has proved quite satisfactory for a once-a-month service.

This, with us, has been a year of great blessing; many have been added to our number. The pastor has been paid all that we promised, and while it was not as much as we would like to have given, still he was perfectly satisfied. All our incidental expenses have been paid, and there is a small balance of that kind on hand. Messrs. were not neglected in our contributions, but received a good share. The Sunday school has been large and interesting; quite a number of Sunday-school scholars have been converted and have joined the church. And, upon the whole, we feel thankful to God for His mercies, and intend to consecrate ourselves afresh to His service at the beginning of the year, relying in His promises and hoping for a greater outpouring of His spirit during the coming year than we have ever had.

And, by the way, I came near forgetting a remark that I wanted to make to those who contend for a full service, when they are unable to pay for more than a half or quarter.

Why not meet every Sunday with the Sunday school, and join in with that service? I tell you, it goes a long way towards making up for the lack of every Sunday preaching. Try it and see if it don't.

J. B.

[A capital idea.—Ed.]

Pastoral Visiting.

Many duty, obligatory upon pastors to keep up a regular system of visiting among the members of their flock, or flocks. While I am not disposed to controvert the points that good may thus be done, and that under certain circumstances, it might be desirable, yet, I have heretofore failed to see that the Scriptures thus require. I read, "Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." Now, if God has any, where commanded pastoral visiting, I have failed to make the discovery; and, until I thus learn, I beg to be excused for failing to regard the mat-

ter as many seem to regard it. Country pastors, as a rule, are reduced to the necessity of following some secular business, as a means of support for their families; and to require them to visit all the members of their churches when they are preaching to from three to six churches, and the membership of these churches scattered from thirty to fifty miles apart, is bringing a tax upon their time and labor that I do not think God has ever required; I therefore, do not propose to undertake the task until it is shown from the Scriptures to be a duty. Men may infer this and so, but the point is, has God commanded it? If not, who else dare require it and pronounce sentence against a preacher for failing to come up to their standard of duty? These men that they can find nothing to make life pleasant. If the sun shines upon them, it is too warm; if rain falls there is too much or not enough, or it has prevented the carrying out of some pet scheme.

If friends would serve or gratify them their efforts are misconstrued, and instead of pleasing they offend. If you greet them with smiles they accuse you of want of sympathy, and should you meet them wearing a sad countenance they will think you are deriding their troubles, with which they know you are perfectly familiar as they have repeatedly burdened you with detailed recitals.

Poor unfortunate! theirs is a miserable existence simply because they make a mistake of trouble out of a very petty annoyance. They will not see the blessings with which God tenderly and lovingly surrounds them, nor will they open their hearts to warmth and sunlight.

Flowers bloom at their feet, but they never admire the wonderful handiwork of their delicate construction, or inhale with delight their delicious perfumes. The sweetest note ever uttered by feathered songster awakes in their bosoms no answering echo of joy. They are above being pleased by such trifles. It must be something great to arouse in them a sensation of joy. And as life is made up of small things, great ones only occurring at rare intervals, their pleasures are often far between.

Sometimes we meet one of these habitual fault-finders who profess to love God—assume to be a servant of Christ. Does it look reasonable that one whose heart is in the keeping of so powerful and meretricious a being could be perpetually troubled? That a servant of the Master who promises rest to the "weary and heavy laden" should be so burdened with cares as to be unable to rise above them.

Nay, it cannot be. The soul that is baptized and purified in the blood of Christ can never be crushed by accumulated woes. Under the administration of the "renewing rod" it humbly bows, "like a reed before the tempest"; but when the sunbeams break forth merrily and thankfully receives the glowing light.

VIRGINIA.

GREENSBURG, LA. Dec. 10, 1878.

Have Not Seen the Righteous Forgiven.

This observation of David was beautifully illustrated at the Louisiana Baptist State Convention at St. Louis last July. Elder John Dupree, near eighty years old, who, until a few years ago, had been a missionary of the Louisiana Convention, moved, sometime ago, to Texas, and there fell among thieves who stripped him of what he had, and left him to work his way back to Louisiana the best he could. This old brother was in the Convention, poorly clad and very quiet. But, when an appeal was made for funds to support a missionary and others were contributing, he could stand it no longer. His soul gushed out in tears; he arose and said he wanted to give—had always given of what he had—but now he had nothing—he could not give. All eyes were upon him and nearly all were suffused with tears. At that moment a brother said, "Give five dollars if you want to, Bro. Dupree, here is the money." Bro. Dupree was too full to speak. The money was given, and enough besides was put into Bro. Dupree's hat to support him several months. He simply said to his benefactors, "God bless you."

J. B. S.

Legs Again.

I like Bro. Bozeman's remarks about "legs." I believe that pastors ought to visit their flocks, but I very much fear that some of our churches attach more importance to ministerial visiting than they do to other very necessary pastoral qualifications. How much better it would have been if they had given more attention to the preparation of their sermons and discourses. Two of them are in

Will Baptists continue to support the nominee simply because he is the nominee, or will they have the Christian manliness to say, because he is an habitual drunkard, gambler or otherwise unworthy, I will not support him? He who aids, abets and encourages a wrong is as guilty as if he had done it himself.

What do you say, brethren?

J. B.

[What do you say, brother Le-mux?—Ed.]

Grumblers.

Who has not been bored by one of these miserable creatures? They are scattered over this wide and wonderful world, surrounded by the "plagues of nature," protected by the tender solicitude of friends, but still they can find nothing to make life pleasant. If the sun shines upon them, it is too warm; if rain falls there is too much or not enough, or it has prevented the carrying out of some pet scheme.

If friends would serve or gratify them their efforts are misconstrued, and instead of pleasing they offend. If you greet them with smiles they accuse you of want of sympathy, and should you meet them wearing a sad countenance they will think you are deriding their troubles, with which they know you are perfectly familiar as they have repeatedly burdened you with detailed recitals.

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the dwelling place of the Lord is not confined to any one place. Beside where we may, we may regard our dwelling, if we are believers, as one room in the Lord's great house, and both in providence and grace find a soul contenting store supplied to us as the results of living by faith in nearness to the Lord.—Spurgeon.

L. C. KATZ.

To the Memory of GEORGE DANA BOARDMAN.

American Missionary to Formosa. Born Feb. 8, 1831. Died Feb. 13th, 1878. (A. C. C. C. C.)

"Believe this was a man whose memory, of which only a few words and letters remain. In those scattered in America who will provide a stone to mark the resting place of this devoted and highly honored servant of God?"

"This morning we visited the English cemetery a mile or more away from Boardman's grave. Here we found the grave of a recently deceased man, who was permitted to labor in his quiet sphere only one hour and a half. In the plain tile of memory is inscribed a sign with these words:—

In Memory of MRS. D. B. L. WADE.

Wife of Rev. J. W. Wade, died Dec. 18th, 1878. After twenty years of married life, she was left a widow, 25 years of age, by the death of her husband. She, being then, yet speaking, said:—

"Like brother and sister, and others who, like them, gave their lives for the Karens, have gone to the rest on High. Their works live after them. Instead of the solitary Karen family, we see twenty thousand Karen Christians now living, a numerous and happy trained native ministry, indigenous missionary societies, well as self-supporting churches, schools and a Christian literature slowly developing."

THE CHINESE WILL THEY CARRY BACK THE GOSPEL?

It is a part of our hope that in reaching the Chinese in California and Oregon with the gospel, we shall multiply the number of those who are to be the gospel in the great empire of China. It is one of the encouraging features of missionary work among the Chinese, on our coast, that they are here, but for a temporary purpose, and are without families. Missionary labor first, for this reason, to build up permanent institutions, and to an all-safety and civilization. It reaches in individual souls, but does not attempt much more. On the other hand, nearly every man here expects to go home, and this soon reached go back to China, with their influence. We find an article in the *American Missionary*, which is interesting as advising facts going to show that converted men return to their own country, missionaries. These facts are numerous and instructive, and establish that the expectation of reaching China by laborers on our Western coast is not a delusion. Among these facts we find the following:—

"About four years ago, Wang M. died at Canton. He was spoken of after his death as the distinguished native pastor of the Baptist church in Canton." It was said that, in the language of American missionaries, he had carried the gospel out of three Baptist churches, and all were now using Wang M. as converted at Sacramento. Returning to his native land, he began to tell in the streets and elsewhere the good news of redeeming love. He was arrested, the attention of Baptist missionaries, and they took him into regular mission work. He had been at it more than twenty years when the Master called him higher. But he has left a son, walking in his father's steps—a preacher of great promise. Why have we not, by this time, sent back to China a hundred Wang M.'s? It might have been done, if it had been done. How large the blessing if it had been done! We are verily guilty in this matter!"—*Horne Mission Monthly*.

Missionary to Africa.

It has always been urged that the evangelization of Africa would be one of the natural fruits of more highly developed Christian life among the colored people of our Southern States. The colored Baptists of Virginia have already moved in that direction. The Rev. Solomon Cosby, for about six years a student of the Richmond Institute—the school for the education of preachers and teachers, maintained in that city by the American Baptist Home Missions Society—recently passed through New York on his way to Africa as a missionary, to be sustained by those brethren. So it is that Home Missions always yield fruit in Foreign Missions. May this, with God's blessing, form the beginning of a great work.—*Id.*

When you preach it is not to speak, but to grow, not to grow, but to speak. Preach just so long that all may hear. Speak every word distinct and clear. Avoid a towering, whirling voice. Of one-manual sounds make choice. Not a drizzle, nor a drizzle, nor a drizzle. For voice and subject should agree. Mind will your subject, and all words. Then you will preach without noise. Moses H. Conners.

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MISSIONS.

A Visit to Tavoy.

Some one in the *Examiner* and *Chronicle* thus writes of a visit to Tavoy:—

"Here we are at last in the birthplace of the Karen Mission: the place where Boardman, Mason, Wade, Cross, Thomas and other younger men have spent large portions of their lives in prayerful, earnest labor. Here Wade gave the Karen people for all time a written language, remarkable for its simplicity and phonetic accuracy. Here it was that Mason translated most of the Karen Bible, and took rank at once as the peer of Jackson, Carey and Morrison. And here Cephus Bennett put the entire work into type, and sent it forth on a strand of salvation to every plain and mountain top in Burma. 'Six or seven years ago Mr. Nesbitt transferred the mission-house, from the low, dark, and crowded native town, to a fine open compound of forty acres on 'Siam Hill.' A better site for a Karen mission could hardly be found. Karen youth must have room to play in fields to roam in, and if possible, a bit of woodland in which to trace the footprints of the deer, or they will not remain healthy and happy. The mission house is very old, and is in a ruinous condition, unfit even for repairs. The school buildings, too, are bad, with the exception of a chapel just completed by Rev. Mr. Murray, at the cost, mainly of the Tavoy Karens. Mr. Murray believes and practices the doctrine of self-support and self-help for the native Christians, thoroughly. It is in other missions which might be named the same principles were adopted, and might look for greater spiritual as well as temporal prosperity."

"Just at the back of Siam Hill, within forty rods of the Karen Mission chapel, lies a beautiful lake some fifty or sixty acres in extent. It would be difficult to find a lovelier spot outside of Eden. The sloping banks of the lake are covered with verdant, diversified with coco palms, brilliant pines and Baobab monasteries with the triple roof, while in the background Tavoy Hill rises majestically, a silent witness to the power and love of the Creator, whose goodness falls unheeded upon the myriads of idolaters on the plain below. In those humid waters, just here and there, perhaps, the sacred lotus flower is floating in its beauty, the sainted Boardman buried in baptism. Ko thah byn, the first Karen convert, fifty years ago the 15th of last May. There is not the shadow of a doubt about the locality, and I greatly regret that I could not secure a photograph of a scene so lovely in itself, and so sacred in its associations."

"Less than four years afterwards, the dying hero insists on being carried a day's journey into those mountains yonder, that rise like Ossa on Pelion, that he may witness the baptism of thirty more disciples at the hands of the newly arrived missionary, Mason. The Karens still point out to travelers the spot where he laid himself back and died on the weary journey homeward."

"In a neglected spot by the roadside in the native town, unenclosed, we found yesterday five or six rude brick monuments, covered with terra and mosses. Two of them are in

memory of missionary children. Somewhere under the turf close by lie the muffled graves of Dr. Mason's good wife, and two of her children. This partially ruined monument bears on one end a broken slate tablet with this inscription:—

JOHN W. WADE.

To the Memory of GEORGE DANA BOARDMAN.

American Missionary to Formosa. Born Feb. 8, 1831. Died Feb. 13th, 1878. (A. C. C. C. C.)

"Believe this was a man whose memory, of which only a

